allocated, and the number of cases where the coal mining leases have been sanctioned, year-wise;

(c) the normal time span from the date of receipt of applications upto the date of identification and allocation of coal mining areas/blocks, and thereafter for grant of mining leases; and

(d) the measures taken to reduce these time lags?

TEH MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) Following the Coal Mine Nationalisation Amendment Act, 1993, permitting captive mining, 58 application for private/public Sector parties, desirous of captive coal mining, have been received.

(b) Out of these, captive mining blocks have been identified for 20 parties, 5 of the parties have applied for approval of mining plans for purpose of obtaining mining leases from the concerned State Governments. Mining plans for 4 parties have since been approved and communicated by the Ministry of Coal.

(c) and (d) The normal time span from receiving of proposal for captive mining to identification of blocks had been 4 to 5 months and that of approval of mining plans thereafter has been 3 to 4 months. All possible steps are taken to clear the cases of captive mining blocks.

Ban on the Import of Silk threads

1750. SHRI K.R. MALKANI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether import of silk threads from the Far East has virtually been banned as reported in the Pioneer dated 14th November, 1996;

(b) whether this has led to acute shortage of silk thread in the country, steep rise in silk prices and fall in silk exports; and

(c) whether this policy has caused acute distress to Banarasi Sari industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) No, Sir, Presently raw silk is in the restricted list of imports and its import is being allowed only under the Advance Licensing Scheme to enable Indian raw silk exporters to meet their raw material requirements at International prices.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Vocational Rehabilitation Centre for Handicapped in Maharashtra

1751. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have established Vocational Rehabilitation Centres for the handicapped persons in the State of Maharashtra, particularly in Nagpur and Vidarbha region of the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) how many of these Centres are exclusively for girls;

(d) if there is none, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether Government propose to increase their number in the State; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) A Vocational Rehabilitation Centre for the Handicapped VRC has been functioning at Mumbai.

(c) and (d) The VRC in Maharashtra caters to boys as well as girls. Due to resource constraints no VRC exclusively for girls has been established in Maharashtra.

(e) & (f) A proposal to set up Regioal Vocational Rehabilitation Centre for Handicapped Women at Mumbai

included as a new scheme in the Ninth Five Year Plan.

New Gold Ores and Diamond Bearing Tracts Discovered in Andhra Pradesh

1752. DR. MOHAN BABU:
DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether new gold ores and diamnod bearing tracts have been discovered in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the expected quantity of new finds;

(c) its impact on the nation's economy; and

(d) the results of other multipronged surveys undertaken by the Geological Survey of India in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Geological Survey of India (GSI) has recenlty discovered following Gold Ores Reserves (Gold Deposits) in Andhra Pradesh:—

	Reserve (m.t.)	Grade (g/tau)
(i) Dona Temple block Kurnool Distt.	0.4	6.0
(ii) Kothapalle block, Anantapur Distt. (Reassessment of Zone-II)	0.115	2.65
(iii) Kudithanapalle block, Chittor Distt.	0.48	1.2

GSI has also identified a number of Kimberlite Bodies—the source rock for Diamond—in the Maddur—Narayanpet belt, Mahaboobnagar district and in Majrakapur belt, Anantapur Distt.

(c) The above findings are of preliminary nature and it is premature at this stage to make any guess about their impact on nation's economy.

(d) As a result of other multipronged survey under taken by GSI in Andhra Pradesh, following important minerals have been identified:—

Mineral	Estimated reserves (M.T.)
Coal	12.5 billion tonnes
Hematitic Iron Ore	46.74
Magnetitic Iron Ore	417.87
Manganese Ore	7.732
Bauxite	592.001
Copper Ore	7.089 (with 0.10 m.t. metal)
Lead Ore	2.089 (with 0.071 m.t. metal)
Gold Ore	6.84
Diamond	194990 Carates
Garnet	5.002
Ilmenite	10.262
Barytes	67.054
Dolomite	129.998
Fuller's Earth	13.289
Sillimanite	1.193

Deaths Caused by Malnutrition in Amaravati Maharashtra

1753. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SAMBHAJI RAO SHINDE: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Governments attention has been drawn to report captioned; "Malnutrition snuffs out 500 lives in Melghat, Amravati (Maharashtra)";

(b) if so, whether Government have verified the reports of deaths of hundreds of children in the Melghat tribal-belt due to malnutrition, if so, the results thereof;

(c) whether any Central aid has been given to the tribal belt of Melghat in Maharashtra State to get rid of the malady, of deaths of hundreds of children due to malnutrition indicating both short term and long measures taken by Central or State Government?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA): (a) Ministry of Welfare is aware of report in "Blitz" Weekly of 24th — 30th August, 1996, published under the Title '500 kids starve to death